

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please replace paragraph number [0003] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0003] Various structures are used to provide such an elevated working surface. For example, various types of ladders are often used to provide access to an elevated location. However, ladders only provide an elevated working surface for a limited lateral work area. Thus, if one's work or activity requires access to an area spread over a relatively large lateral distance, use of a ladder requires repeated ascent, descent and moving of the ladder to perform the activity. Additionally, a ladder conventionally only ~~provide~~ provides an elevated working surface for one individual at a time.

Please replace paragraph number [0004] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0004] Another structure which provides an elevated working surface is a scaffold. A scaffold includes a ~~frame~~ framework which supports ~~a one~~ one or more elevated planks or platforms. The platforms generally provide a horizontally or laterally extending surface on which one or more individuals may access a relatively large area at a desired vertical elevation. The planks or platforms are conventionally movable and may be repositioned vertically and/or horizontally thereby providing considerable flexibility with regard to the elevated areas a user may access thereby.

Please replace paragraph number [0006] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0006] Another solution which has been employed is the use of a plank or platform placed on a pair of elevated supports. For example, a wooden plank may be placed on a pair of supports, often referred to as ladder jacks, with the supports each being structurally coupled to one of a pair of spaced apart ladders. In a more simple arrangement, the plank may be placed directly on a ~~wrung~~ rung of one of a pair of spaced apart step ladders. Other platforms, including longitudinally extensible platforms such as are shown in U.S. Patent Nos. 3,703,220 issued

November 21, 1972, and 5,067,589 issued November 26, 1991, may be used in a similar manner with a pair of laterally spaced supports.

Please replace paragraph number [0008] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0008] While, the arrangement of a plank or platform supported by a pair of laterally spaced supports provides a convenient and flexible solution in many circumstances, various functional and safety issues may arise in utilizing such an arrangement. For example, the simple placement of a plank or platform on top of a pair of supports gives rise to a situation where the end of the plank or platform may slip off ~~of one~~ one of the supports and cause the plank or platform, and anyone (or anything) supported thereby, to fall. Such slippage between the plank or platform and its supports may be due to, for example, continued lateral movement of an individual on the platform resulting in a series of small displacements of the platform relative to the supports. Also, slippage may occur between a platform and its supports when a user supported thereby applies a lateral force to a portion of an elevated structure thereby inducing a reactionary force within the platform and displacing the platform relative to its supports.

Please replace paragraph number [0009] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0009] Some types of planks or platforms include one or more fixed hooks or similar structural members at each longitudinal end thereof configured to engage a cross-member of the laterally spaced supports and prevent relative lateral displacement ~~between~~ therebetween. However, the use of fixed hooks to engage a support limits the flexibility of such an arrangement with respect to the relative placement of the plank or platform and the laterally spaced supports. Additionally, the use of fixed hooks assumes that the supports have an appropriately sized and configured cross-member for cooperative engagement therewith. In other words, the use of hooks to prevent lateral displacement of the plank or platform relative to its supports can be limiting with regard to which structures may be used as supports.

Please replace paragraph number [0014] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0014] In accordance with another aspect of the invention, another platform assembly is provided. The platform assembly includes a first assembly having at least one longitudinally extending member and a second assembly having at least one longitudinally extending member. The second assembly is longitudinally, slidably coupled with the first assembly. At least one catch device is associated ~~with~~ with the first assembly and positionable between a first position wherein a body portion of the at least one catch device projects from a first surface of the first assembly and a second position wherein the body portion projects from a second opposing surface of the first assembly.

Please replace paragraph number [0024] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0024] Referring to FIG. 1, an extensible platform 100 is shown in accordance with an exemplary embodiment of the present invention. The extensible platform 100 includes a first assembly 102A including a plurality of spaced-apart, longitudinally extending structural members 104. The structural members 104 of the first assembly are interleaved with a corresponding second assembly 102B which includes a plurality of spaced-apart, longitudinally extending structural members 106. For sake of convenience, the longitudinally extending structural members 104 and 106 will be referred to ~~hereafter~~ hereinafter as longitudinal members. The longitudinal members 104 of the first assembly 102A are longitudinally slidable relative to the longitudinal members 106 of the second assembly 102B. The relative movement of the first and second assemblies 102A and 102B enable the platform 100 to longitudinally extend and contract and thereby provide a platform of various lengths depending on the various and changing needs of a user of such a platform. It is noted that, while the exemplary embodiment of FIG. 1 is described in terms of a plurality of longitudinal members, in another embodiment, each assembly 102A and 102B could include a single longitudinally extending member with, for example, a longitudinally extending member of the first assembly 102A being slidably coupled to the longitudinally extending member of the second assembly 102B as will be appreciated by those of ordinary skill in the art.

Please replace paragraph number [0026] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0026] The first assembly 102A includes a first lateral support member 108 at or adjacent a first end 110 of the assembly 102A. More specifically, the first lateral support member 108 serves to tie or fix the longitudinal members 104 relative to one another. Additionally, a plurality of spacers 112 may be used to fix the lateral position of each longitudinal member 104 relative ~~each~~ to each adjacent longitudinal member 104. Such spacers are configured to exhibit a width substantially equal to the width of a longitudinal member 106 of the second assembly 102B. Thus, the spacers 112 and the longitudinal members 106 of the second assembly 102B serve to establish a substantially parallel relationship of the longitudinal members 104 of the first assembly 102A. The first lateral support member 108 may be fixed to one more of the longitudinal members as desired. However, with the use of appropriate spacers 112, it may only be necessary to fix the lateral support member 108 to the two outer longitudinal members 104A and 104B.

Please replace paragraph number [0027] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0027] Referring briefly to FIG. 2 which shows a partial sectional view of one end of the first assembly 102A, the first lateral support member 108 may include, for example, a section of tubing which fits within and extends through corresponding openings formed in the longitudinal members 104. The spacers 112 may, for example, be configured ~~as a~~ as individual sections of tubing which exhibit an inside diameter substantially similar to the outside diameter of the first lateral support member 108 and configured to slide or slip thereover. The spacers 112 may then be configured such that their outside diameters are larger than the corresponding openings formed in the longitudinal members 104 such that they abuttingly contact the side 114 of each adjacent longitudinal member 104. Referring back to FIGS. 1A and 1B, the first lateral support member 108 may be coupled to the outer longitudinal members 104A and 104B by, for example, swaging the ends of the tubing member. Of course, the first lateral support member 108 may be coupled to the longitudinal members 104 in other ways such as by adhesive,

welding, brazing, or via other mechanical fasteners depending, for example on the materials of construction of both the first lateral support member 108 and the longitudinal members 104.

Please replace paragraph number [0029] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0029] A cross member 122 may be coupled to the first assembly 102A adjacent the first lateral support member 108. While not necessarily acting as such, the cross member 122 may also be used as a lateral support member if so desired. One or more self-locking, catch members 124 are pivotably coupled with the cross member 122. Referring back to FIG. 3, the cross member 122 may formed of, for example, tubing extended ~~through-a~~ through corresponding openings in the longitudinal members 104. The cross member 122 may be coupled to at least the outer two longitudinal members 104A and 104B (FIG. 1A) in a manner similar to that of the first lateral support member 108. For example, the cross member 122 may be coupled to the outer longitudinal members 104A and 104B (FIG. 1A) by, for example, swaging the ends of the tubing, by means of adhesive, welding, brazing, or via other mechanical fasteners. In another embodiment, the multiple cross members 122 ~~with~~ are each ~~being~~ coupled with adjacent longitudinal members 104.

Please replace paragraph number [0032] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0032] Referring back to FIGS. 1A and 1B, one or more stopping members 132A and 132B may be utilized to limit the longitudinal extension of the first assembly 102A relative to the second assembly 102B. For example, a first stopping member 132A may be coupled to the outer longitudinal member 104A of the first assembly 102A and, upon extension of the two assemblies 102A and 102B, slide towards and into abutting contact with the second lateral support member 126 of the second assembly 102B so as to limit the relative longitudinal extension of the first and second assemblies 102A and 102B. Similarly, a second stopping member 132B may be coupled ~~a to a~~ to a longitudinal member 106 of the second assembly and, upon extension of the two assemblies 102A and 102B relative one another, slide towards and contact the ~~second~~ first lateral support member 108 of the first assembly 102A. Other structures or

stopping mechanisms may be used if so desired. However, the presently disclosed stopping members, when located on the sides of the first and second assemblies 102A and 102B respectively, are unobtrusive and do not act to inadvertently trip a user of the platform as would occur if they were located on a working surface of the platform.

Please replace paragraph number [0034] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0034] It is noted that the individual longitudinal members 104 and 106 act as structural support members and, in many instances, depending on the support configuration, may be considered as beams which are simply supported at each end. Thus, the longitudinal members 104 and 106 must be of sufficient structural design to provide support to at least one, and desirably a plurality of users with their tools and supplies. Referring briefly to FIG. 3, the longitudinal members may exhibit various cross-sectional configurations as taken transversely to the longitudinal axis ~~126~~ 128 thereof (see FIG. 2). Exemplary cross-sectional configurations may include a box-beam 140 or other closed polygonal configuration such as shown in FIG. 3A; a substantial I-beam configuration 142 such as shown in FIG. 3B which may provide for a reduction in material and weight; or a some other configuration such as a “dog-bone” cross section 144 such as shown in FIG. 3C.

Please replace paragraph number [0038] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0038] Referring now to FIGS. 5A-5C, the operation of the self-locking catch mechanism is shown and described. Referring first to FIG. 5A, the end of the platform 100, or more specifically, the end of the first assembly 102A of the platform may be placed on a support such as, for example, the rung 160 of a ladder. The platform 100, or at least the first assembly 102A thereof, may then be displaced in the direction indicated by directional arrow 162. It is noted that the displacement indicated by directional arrow 162, and discussed in further detail below, essentially involves the displacement of the first assembly 102A, which may occur as a result of extending the first and second assemblies 102A and 102B relative ~~one to one~~ to one

another (see ~~FIGS~~FIGS. 1A, 1B and 4). However, the displacement of the first assembly 102A may also indicate that the entire platform 100 is being displaced.

Please replace paragraph number [0046] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0046] A first flange 194A may be formed at, or coupled to, a first end of the body portion 182 and a second flange 194B may be formed at, or coupled to, a second end of the body portion 182. The sleeve or collar 192 (or the longitudinal member 104A) may exhibit shoulder sections 196A and 196B adjacent the upper surface 134 and the undersurface 136 of the platform 100 respectively. Thus, with the body portion 182 in the first position 184 projecting from the upper surface 134 of the platform 100, the lower flange 194B may be received in the shoulder section 196B such that the flange 194B is substantially flush with the undersurface 136. Similarly, when ~~in the~~ the body portion is in the second position 186, the upper flange 194A may be received in the shoulder section 196A such that the flange 194A is substantially flush with the upper surface 134. In another embodiment, shoulder sections 196A and 196B may not be provided and the flanges may simply abut the sleeve or collar 192 or, depending on the configuration, they may directly abut the upper surface and ~~undersurfaces~~ undersurface 134 and 136 of the platform 100.

Please replace paragraph number [0048] with the following rewritten paragraph:

[0048] In another embodiment, the body portion 182 may be configured to be slidable relative to the longitudinal member 104A, but only upon application of a force by a user of the platform 100. For example, the body portion 182 may be sized and configured to provide an interfering fit with the sleeve or collar 192 such that it stays in the first position 184, regardless of the effects of gravity, until a user physically pushes the body portion 182 into the second position 186. With the catch device 180 in the second position 186, it may serve as a catch or stop by engaging the rung 160 of a ladder, or the edge of some other support member, to prevent sliding or “walking” of the platform relative ~~to~~ to a support member such as described above herein.